

Appl. No. 09/944,477
Amdt. Dated October 20, 2003
Reply to Office Action of July 21, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A process for manufacturing a composite sheet capable of elastic stretch and contract in one direction, said process comprising:

- (a) continuously feeding, in the one direction, a first web capable of elastic stretch and contraction and having a top surface and a bottom surface;
- (b) extending said first web in the one direction within a range that permits elastic stretch and contraction of the first web;
- (c) continuously feeding a second web capable of inelastic extension and composed of thermoplastic fibers along the one direction;
- (d) superimposing said second web on at least one surface of the extended first web and joining said second web to the first web in an intermittent manner along the one direction to provide a composite web;
- (e) extending the composite web in the one direction within a range that permits elastic stretch and contraction of the first web; and

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(f) allowing the extended composite web to retract by an elastic contraction force of the first web to thereby obtain a composite sheet in which individual thermoplastic fibers of the second web are individualized neither fused nor mechanically entangled tightly with each other between discrete areas where the first and second webs are joined together in step (d).

Claim 2 (previously amended): The process of Claim 1, wherein said thermoplastic synthetic fibers of the second web are engaged with each other by mechanical entanglement or fusion bonding and in step (e), the thermoplastic synthetic fibers are partly freed from the engagement to the extent that they individualized.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The process of Claim 1, wherein two second webs are provided with one second web joined to the top surface of the first web and another second web joined to the bottom surface of the first web, and the second webs respectively joined to the top and bottom surfaces of the first web being distinguished from each other by at least one property selected from the groups consisting of basis weight, density, type of the thermoplastic synthetic resin, diameter, and length of the fibers thereof.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The process of ~~Claims~~ Claim 1, wherein said first web comprises at least one of an elastically stretchable fabric composed of thermoplastic synthetic fibers and an elastically stretchable film made of a thermoplastic synthetic resin.

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Claim 5 (previously amended): The process of Claim 1, wherein said thermoplastic synthetic fibers in the second web comprise continuous fibers.

Claim 6 (~~currently canceled~~)